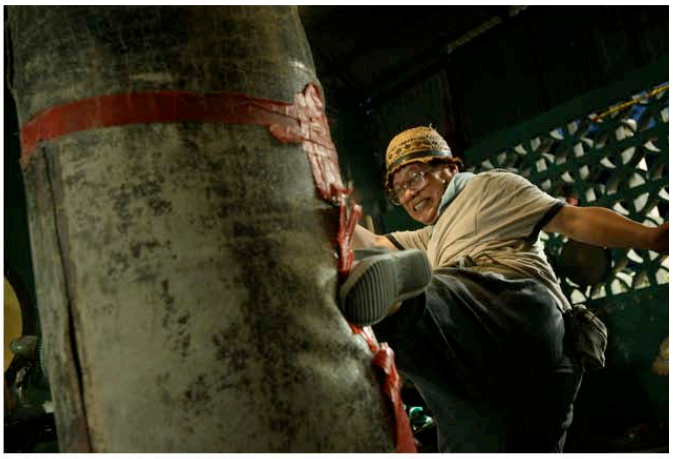
Reel Asian 2010 is Bigger, Better, Just as Asian
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Reel Asian 2010 is Bigger, Better, Just as Asian



Still from Reel Asian 2010 opening gala selection Gallants *courtesy V. Kelly & Associates.*

Like *Star Trek* or Frank Zappa, Asian cinema's one of those things you can't get just halfway into. With so many films released every year (plenty of them very good), the cinema of East and Southeast Asia can be exceptionally daunting. And when you see one great Asian film, you get the nagging feeling that you've missed a dozen. For every *Crouching Tiger*, *Chungking Express*, or *Oldboy* that crosses over, there are hundreds of other films that remain less accessible. Luckily, Toronto's got Reel Asian, the film festival devoted to culling the cream of East and Southeast Asia's celluloid crop.

Now entering its fourteenth year, the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival remains Canada's most comprehensive and longest-running showcase of films from across Asia—not just cinematic juggernauts like Hong Kong, Japan, and in the past decade, South Korea, but Taiwan, the Philippines, and more. And on Tuesday night at the Japan Foundation on Bloor Street, Reel Asian unveiled its 2010 programming. (But better than all that: the press conference included an Asian Elvis impersonator, which is the kind of thing every press conference should include. In fact, almost any public gathering would be made better by the inclusion of an Asian Elvis impersonator.)

Running from November 9 to 15 of this year, Reel Asian 2010 is bigger than ever. This year, festival planners added two extra days to the festival. They've also expanded into the 'burbs, teaming up with the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts to screen some films for Hill-folk averse to taking two buses and a subway just to get downtown. It's an expansion of the initial vision of festival co-founders Anita Lee and Andrew Sun, and further proof that the popularity of Asian Cinema (especially in Toronto) continues unabated. Though perhaps this comes as no surprise in a year where Apichatpong Weerasethakul is a household name. Well, in the households of discerning cinephiles, anyhow.



Reel Asian 2010 highlights announced at Tuesday's press conference include the opening gala presentation of *Gallants* co-directed by Canada's Clement Sze-Kit Cheng and Hong Kong's Derek Chi-kin Kwok. An homage to the bare-knuckle Hong Kong kung fu films of the '70s, *Gallants* sets a nice pace for this year's festival, which features some other high-octane actioners like *Ip Man 2*. On the Canadian tip, this year's fest has, among many other films, a collaborative project by several Toronto-based Chinese filmmakers entitled *Suite Suite Chinatown*, which looks at how loci of the Chinese-Canadian diaspora in urban centres are differently configured as sites of cosmopolitanism, xenophobia, and degeneration.

Of course that's just the tip of the iceberg. There were plenty more galas, special presentations, and installations announced last night. But don't take our word for it. Head over to the Reel Asian website for all the relevant dates, listings, and tickets information. With the expanded program this year, Reel Asian really offers something for everyone, and serves as the perfect opportunity to either dive into Asian cinema headfirst, or just get your feet wet.

By John Semley on October 13, 2010 1:45 PM